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such a mastery of these facts by youthful minds is less certain. Efficient as the catechism has proved in teaching dogma and much as we may regret the tendency to abandon it, both reason and experience seem to be against the success of teaching history by question and answer. The parts of a picture are severed, the charm of the narrative broken, and the sequence and association of events, memory's greatest aid, largely lost. It is likely that with the same amount and quality of instruction far better results will be obtained from the use of the gospels themselves accompanied by some such book as Blackall's *Stories about Jesus*.

As for the execution of the author's task, one can but think that in several respects it might have been better. There is a tendency to be too certain about uncertain things; *e. g.*, the method of Christ's temptation, the efficiency of John's baptism, the considerations in the Divine mind in selecting Palestine as the birthplace of the Saviour. Difficult and technical terms are frequently introduced without explanation and sometimes unnecessarily, such as "hippodrome," "procurator," "excommunicated," "felicity." The selection of material is occasionally out of proportion; *e. g.*, the Sadducees are dismissed with two small questions, while a page and a half are given to the Essenes. But more serious is the lack of historical accuracy. For instance, to the question, "Does he (John) often mention himself in his own narrative?" The answer is assigned: "No, only twice —" and the occasions of 1:37 ff. and 19:26 f. are mentioned. It would be difficult to imagine how the author managed to overlook 13:23 ff.; 18:15 ff.; 20:2 ff.; 21:2, 7, 20, 24. The book will doubtless be helpful to some, but, all things considered, it is not likely to prove a great success.

J. S. T.

The Wise Men of Ancient Israel and Their Proverbs, by CHARLES FOSTER KENT, PH.D., Associate Professor of Biblical Literature and History, Brown University. Silver, Burdett & Co., New York, Boston, Chicago, 1895. 12 mo.; pp. 208.

The central purpose of this volume is a scientific classification of the Proverbs of the book of that name on the basis of their thought. But as an acquaintance with the aims and methods of "the Wise" who produced them is considered a prerequisite to their intelligent study, several chapters of "Introductory Studies" precede the classification.

"The Hebrew Wise" are considered as a class in their relation to the other orders of Hebrew teachers and in their influence upon Israelitish history which is represented as much greater than is commonly supposed. The different types of Wisdom Literature as appearing in isolated passages throughout the Old Testament, as well as in what is technically known as the Wisdom Literature, are discussed and exemplified. Under "Proverbs and Proverb Making" the philosophical basis of this form of literature is presented. The fourth chapter is devoted to the consideration of the structure,

authorship, and date of the several divisions of our canonical Book of Proverbs. The Solomonic authorship of any section in its present form is denied, but it is maintained that many of the sayings of the "wisest man" have been preserved in connection with the product of later sages. The superscription of chapters 25-29 is accepted as authentic, and the preëxilic origin of all except the two final appendices is convincingly argued.

The need of a logical rearrangement of the proverbs is plain to every one. The manner in which moral maxims, rules for the management of business and the government of a state or the family, observations on the character of Jehovah, the nature of man, the relations of the different classes of society, the usages of courts of justice and scores of other subjects are thrown together without any apparent order is very confusing and precludes any definite impression on the mind of the cursory reader, at least. It is not to be expected that any one could rearrange this medley so as to meet the views of all in detail, but the author has evidently done his work with great care and the new form is much more readable and intelligible than the order, or want of it, to which we have been accustomed.

The classification is followed by two "Supplementary Studies" on "The Social Teachings" and on "The Use by Jesus of the Book of Proverbs" which are suggestive. The book closes with an index by which any proverb may be found in its new setting.

C. E. C.

The Jewish Scriptures. The Books of the Old Testament in the Light of Their Origin and History. By AMOS KIDDER FISKE. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896, pp. 390. \$1.50.

The writer declares that the purpose of this volume is "to present the history and literature of the ancient Hebrews, as contained in the Old Testament, in a clear, concise, and candid way, applying the benefit of the light revealed by modern research and learning, and applying the same calm judgment to which we are accustomed in dealing with the productions of other ancient peoples." In the carrying out of this task, he divides his work into two parts: (1) The "Background of the Jewish Scriptures," under which he covers in a series of thirty-eight chapters the outlines of Jewish history down to the time of the Maccabees; and (2) the "Books of the Old Testament," in which the books are handled separately, mainly in the order, the Hexateuch, historical books, prophetic books, wisdom literature. For the accomplishment of so important a piece of work as is laid out in this volume there are two qualities of mind, at least one of which is essential. These are accuracy and sympathy. The writer should be able either to present the facts of the material with which he deals according to the latest and most trustworthy investigations, or he should possess and reveal such an interest in his subject, such an insight born of love for the men and the events he discusses, that the reader is willing to condone the lack of absolute or even